

THE ENGLISH LEAFLET

THE NEW ENGLAND
ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 28, 1901

GEORGE H. BROWNE, PRESIDENT

F. W. C. HERSEY, SEC'Y AND TREAS.

CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS, EDITOR

THE ENGLISH LEAFLET is published by the New England Association of Teachers of English, every month except July, August, and September. Subscription price, One Dollar. Entered as second class matter May 1, 1914, at the post office at Boston, Mass., under the acts of March 3, 1879. Editor, Charles Swain Thomas, Newtonville, Mass.; Secretary-Treasurer, F. W. C. Hersey, Warren House, Cambridge, Mass.

VOL. XVI.

MAY 1916

NUMBER 136

UNIFORMITY

PERCY W. LONG, PH.D.

Harvard University

Uniformity in the sections of large courses has been in part a concession to criticism. The individual instructor left to himself would be likely to develop his topics and treatment as the class developed, making of his course the spontaneous organization of an art which finds its expression in living. Only so can there be an intimate response to present needs and a class *en rapport* with an instructor guiding a natural interest.

The officer superintending instructors of sections at times feels sceptical as to this intimate rapport and even as to the existence of an artistic adaptation. A student complains that his roommate has less work to do, or receives better grades for inferior performance. Also he says in the corridors that the nature of section work varies, affording in some sections both interest and a sense of profit, in others neither; but this sort of comment he does not present as a complaint. Correspondingly, officers of instruction have sought to create an apparent uniformity in two respects,—the amount of work required and the general nature of subject matter, leaving to individual taste or whim those special modifications which transform an abstract type into manifold reality.

The instructor therefore finds that in a given week he must assign four pages to be written, must lecture on description, and test in some way the students' reading in a specified book. Even so he is relatively fortunate; at some

institutions all would be writing on the same topic at the same length under the same instructions; reading the same chapter in the same book, and listening to an amplification of the same outlines. It is an intellectual diet foreordained; hash on Wednesday, ham on Friday. All the stimulus which spontaneity, timeliness, and the "literary moment" bring into being must be sacrificed to an accomplishment of the routine schedule.

And does this achieve uniformity? The student will tell you that two sections are not like two pease, that one is relatively much the more worth while; and the staff will tacitly acknowledge his estimate. For in point of fact the page—or the number of words—proves no real measure. Not only does handwriting vary, and prolixity, and the frequency of particles: assignments, also are incommensurably different in labor. "Something I have observed", an imitation of Addison or of Macaulay, a *précis* of a lecture. How to start an automobile. "Farrar's version of Carmen",—may each measure one page or three hundred words. Again, the lecturer in choosing illustrative material, may lead a class into the commonplace or the gross, or the poetic, or the acutely analytic. He may do so in connection with each of the "forms" of writing; whatever the day of the year.

Memories of classroom hours rarely preserve from a course its subject matter—beyond a chance aside, an odd incident, a phrase reiterated by the week and month; they centre on the personality of the instructor, the atmosphere he creates, his lure and cogency in presenting an example. Because personalities vary, sections vary—in much that is of highest importance. My classmates at Harvard summon up William James—restless, acute, inquisitive, heartily sympathetic,—or Charles Eliot Norton with formal dignity, grandly simple, deliberately penetrating, aloof,—or Lewis Edward Gates, incisive, ironical, polished, with his ever recurrent maxim "specific words."

Uniformity in tone, atmosphere, and plane cannot and should not be attempted to the sacrifice of personality. Yet something like equality of plane is certainly more influential and of more consequence than a yard stick for themes or a program of topics. Some progress toward such equality has been made: teachers generally, I hazard, are agreed on presenting an attitude uniformly patient, courteous, kindly, and just. Those who differ would do well to fall in line. But divergence attaches to other fundamentals; many lec-

turers "talk down" to their classes; many, to escape charges of favoritism, become repellantly impersonal.

A formalist may object that such matters do not concern the teaching of the subject. True: in that they concern the teaching of every subject. The fundamental principles in a student's education concern no specialist exclusively, and are often dealt with by none. In our specializing these essentials of education have been thrust back largely on student life—till student life, to the teacher's dissatisfaction, seems of primary importance. But the English department should not so much teach English as educate by teaching English, and the History department should not so much teach history as educate by teaching history.

To be specific: a classroom hour in English composition need concern itself very little with rules and precepts about writing. The student forgets these soon, and rarely applies them; he learns by the inspiration received from models. The supreme thing his instructor can do is to put before him appropriate models, especially in classroom discourse. Whether the instructor talks of current politics or Nova Zembla or the Mona Lisa, or of dangling participles matters very little: it does matter that he talk correctly, clearly, and with point. Otherwise, "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

The atmosphere of a course most students will quickly gauge, and adjust their conduct accordingly. Let a teacher center on spelling and punctuation; so will his students—for they are students of him—to the neglect of thought and charm. Should he centre on the latter, his students, endeavoring to secure intellectual and aesthetic qualities, will insensibly gain the passion for perfection, and will spell and punctuate. A gesture sufficiently rebukes one who lapses. So long as the teacher does not lose contact, it is my conviction, the higher one's plane the better. A recent requirement that themes should meet two touch-stones, that they should be *distinctive* and should have some trace of *beauty*—resulted in an upward swing that I had never before achieved. The students wrote with those words as criteria.

Atmosphere for the section, though helped by the best students, must be set by the instructor; so, in a staff, the directing officer is paramount. His function is to provide an example acceptable and worthy, luring to emulation. Shall he set a standard of jocosity and irony? an atmosphere tainted by the histrionic or the sentimental? He must

dare to be candidly his best self. And considerations of staff meetings should initially concern such matters as the plane, and degree of intellectual complexity, which a given class proves capable of meeting.

To make more concrete the divergence in atmosphere which appears to be wide-spread and of more consequence than formal, general specifications of uniformity, consider a recent class hour spent with a collegiate class in required composition. The class was already accustomed to the instructor, and with that condition the hour should be feasible with previously well-drilled high school seniors. Its effectiveness depends on slow and explicit handling.

(The instructor's memoranda follow).

State that the subjects of the hour are differences of movement and plane in style. Recall the short sentences in exciting narrative passages—a movement which French rhetoricians called *style coupe*, a choppy or staccato style. With this they contrasted *style periodique*, a structure of longer, involved sentences, having a kind of swell and ebb. The first is suited to vivid or witty passages, where many impressions must be distinctly conveyed in quick succession. For example, see the *Spectator*, No. 494. (The class is reading from my "Prose Style.")

Sombrius is one of these men of sorrow. He thinks himself obliged in duty to be sad and disconsolate. He looks on a sudden fit of laughter as a breach of his baptismal vow. An innocent jest startles him like blasphemy. Tell him of one who is advanced to a title of honour, he lifts up his hands and eyes; describe a public ceremony, he shakes his head; show him a gay equipage, he blesses himself. All the little ornaments of life are pomps and vanities. Mirth is wanton, and wit profane. He is scandalized at youth for being lively, and at childhood for being playful. He sits at a christening or a marriage-feast as at a funeral; sighs at the conclusion of a merry story, and grows devout when the rest of the company grow pleasant. After all, Sombrius is a religious man, and would have behaved himself very properly had he lived when Christianity was under persecution.

—ADDISON.

Call attention to the reversal of mood, at the close, like the couplet of an English sonnet, or in a narrative like the dreamer awakening, or in a description the shattering of the picture—its violation of unity, and on the other hand its utility in preserving poise. Note that Addison would not have used *these* in beginning a composition. Note the interviewing of two sets of words, one morose and one care-

free (L'Allegro and Il Penseroso). Read the passage again for its total effect.

Style coupe requires little effort at concentration; *style periodique* requires a maturity of mind adequate to hold in one's mind many complex and related ideas. Just as a student's mind teems with a schematized course on examination morn, so a developed creating brain links in association many details. In reading the next excerpt, from Ruskin, the class will feel the swell and ebb but will have no clear idea of the meaning.

In the edifice of Man there should be found reverent worship and following—not only of the spirit which rounds the pillars of the forest, and arches the vault of the avenue, which gives veining to the leaf and polish to the shell, and grace to every pulse that agitates animal organization—but of that also which reproves the pillars of the earth, and builds up her barren precipices into the coldness of the clouds, and lifts her shadowy cones of mountain purple into the pale arch of the sky; for these, and other glories more than these, refuse not to connect themselves, in his thoughts, with the work of his own hand: the gray cliff loses not its nobleness when it reminds us of some Cyclopean waste of furil stone; the pinnacles of the rocky promontory arrange themselves, undergraded, into fantastic semblances of fortress towers, and even the awful cone of the far-off mountain has a melancholy mixed with that of its own solitude, which is cast from the images of nameless tumuli on white sea-shores, and of the heaps of reedy clay, into which chambered cities melt in their mortality.

—RUSKIN.

It is beautiful, with a kind of iridescent beauty that is not luminous. Ask the class to read it silently and then explain. One suggests that Ruskin is moralizing: man should live a life not only beautiful but noble; or, man should be spiritual because nature is spiritual. Collect variants. Then line by line translate it into the commonplace. "Edifice of Man"—architecture. Bring out the equations of columns and trees. cathedral vaults and cathedral groves, rose windows and groining with the leaf, marble and porphyry with the shell. Pass from the spirit of beauty to the spirit of sublimity (Burke). Recall, as a supplement to Ruskin, the shapes people trace in cloud formations; then the melancholy of noble ruins such as Assyrian and Babylonian mounds (recently illustrated in the American Geographical Magazine)—now "heaps of reedy clay." Construct a *précis* sentence: architecture should imitate not only the beauty of nature but the sublimity; for sublime objects in nature suggest to us, without cheapening themselves, architectural remains. Re-

read the sentence: it will now appear clearly unified and understandable as well as beautiful.

The class should be musing: transfer attention to the following passage from Newman's "Grammar of Assent:"

Let us consider, too, how differently young and old are affected by the words of some classic author, such as Homer or Horace. Passages, which to a boy are but rhetorical common-places, neither better nor worse than a hundred others which any clever writer might supply, which he gets by heart and thinks very fine, and imitates, as he thinks, successfully, in his own flowing versification, at length come home to him, when long years have passed, and he has had experience of life, and pierce him, as if he had never before known them, with their sad earnestness and vivid exactness. Then he comes to understand how it is that lines, the birth of some chance morning or evening at an Ionian festival, or among the Sabine hills, have lasted generation after generation, for thousands of years, with a power over the mind, and a charm, which the current literature of his own day, with all its obvious advantages, is utterly unable to rival. Perhaps this is the reason of the medieval opinion about Virgil, as if a prophet or magician; his single words and phrases, his pathetic half lines, giving utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness, yet hope of better things, which is the experience of her children in every time.

—NEWMAN.

If well read it will be followed and a good student can orally summarize it—as he could not have done at the beginning of the hour. Call attention now to the different plane from that of Addison. Speak of musical chords; the high notes expressing purity, ideality, joy; the low notes, evil, danger, ill omen. So, associated words place one in a certain mood. Compare from Addison line 3 with Ruskin line 7. The former words are on the plane of daily gossip; the latter impart an upward swing and thrill. This is gained by unity: unity of emotional appeal, of congruity in the associations of words. Addison showed two such unities commingling in antithesis.

The same point as it concerns larger blocks of discourse has been well stated by Lord Kames in his "Elements of Criticism."

A capital rule for reaching the sublime in such works of art as are capable of it, is, to present those parts or circumstances only which make the greatest figure, keeping out of view every thing low and trivial; for the mind, elevated by an important object, cannot, without reluctance, be forced down to bestow any share of its attention upon trifles. Such judicious selection of capital circumstances, is styled *grandeur of manner*. In none of the fine arts is there so great scope for that rule as in poetry; which, by that means, enjoys a remarkable power of bestowing upon objects and

events the air of grandeur; when we are spectators, every minute object presents itself in its order; but, in describing at second-hand, these are laid aside, and the capital objects are brought close together. A judicious taste in thus selecting the most interesting incidents, to give them a united force, accounts for a fact that may appear surprising; which is, that we are more moved by a spirited narrative at second-hand, than by being spectators of the event itself, in all its circumstances.

—KAMES.

Selection, in other words, is the principle which transforms the chaos of reality into a cosmos of art, and puts before our eyes the world as the artist desires it to be seen. Such selection determines the plane (whether of corrective exercises in punctuation or analysis of an author's distinctive note, or the expression of a beautiful vision). Observe in Longinus' treatise "On the Sublime" how by gradation to more and more noble imagery he rises to a climax comparable, even in translation, to Ruskin's.

What truth, then, was it that was present to those mighty spirits of the past, who, making whatever is greatest in writing, their aim, thought it beneath them to be exact in every detail? Among many others especially this, that it was not in nature's plan for us her chosen children to be creatures base and ignoble,—no, she brought us into life, and into the whole universe, as into some great field of contest, that we should be at once spectators and ambitious rivals of her mighty deeds, and from the first implanted in our souls an invincible yearning for all that is great, all that is diviner than ourselves. Therefore even the whole world is not wide enough for the soaring range of human thought, but man's mind often overleaps the very bounds of space. When we survey the whole circle of life, and see it abounding everywhere in what is elegant, grand, and beautiful, we learn at once what is the true end of man's being. And this is why nature prompts us to admire, not the clearness and usefulness of a little stream, but the Nile, the Danube, the Rhine, and far beyond all the Ocean; not to turn our wandering eyes from the heavenly fires, though often darkened, to the little flame kindled by human hands, however pure and steady its light; not to think that tiny lamp more wondrous than the caverns of Aetna, from whose raging depths are hurled up stones and whole masses of rock, and torrents sometimes come pouring from earth's centre of pure and living fire.

—LONGINUS.

You have seen in Addison "the clearness and usefulness of a little stream", "the little flame kindled by human hands . . . pure and steady." That places Addison. But as a more sharply contrasting plane of style turn to the following passage from "Our Village":

Ascending the hill are two couples of a different description, Daniel Tubb and his fair Valentine, walking boldly along like licensed lovers; they have been asked twice in church, and are to be married on Tuesday; and closely following that happy pair, near each other but not together, come Jem Tanner and Mabel Green, the poor culprits of the wheat-hoeing. Ah! the little clerk hath not relented! The course of true love doth not yet run smooth in that quarter. Jem dodges along, whistling, "Cherry-ripe," pretending to walk by himself, and to be thinking of nobody; but every now and then he pauses in his negligent saunter, and turns round outright to steal a glance at Mabel, who, on her part, is making believe to walk with poor Olive Hathaway, the lame mantua-maker, and even affecting to talk and to listen to that gentle, humble creature, as she points to the wild flowers on the common, and the lambs and children disporting amongst the gorse, but whose thought and eyes are evidently fixed on Jem Tanner, as she meets his backward glance with a blushing smile, and half springs forward to meet him: whilst Olive has broken off the conversation as soon as she perceived the pre-occupation of her companion, and begun humming, perhaps unconsciously, two or three lines of Burns, whose "Whistle and I'll come to ye, my lad," and "Gi'e me a glance of thy bonny black e'e," were never better exemplified than in the couple before her.

—MITFORD.

This is the plane on which the class lives and talks. You now see it from above, insignificant as traffic from a high tower, pretty as a Japanese miniature garden. It is not the plane of your ideals. But look again, compare with it your reading from magazines, and comic supplements, and current fiction. What is the plane of that? You make and live on the plane you choose.

Dismiss the class even if another section continues to meet five minutes longer. It is not in *that* matter you need consider the problem of uniformity.

—PERCY W. LONG.

Harvard University

16 April, 1916.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, ETC., of the *English Leaflet*, published monthly except July, August, and September at Newtonville, Boston, Mass.

Editor, Charles Swain Thomas, Newtonville, Mass.

Business Manager, F. W. C. Hersey, Warren House, Cambridge, Mass.

Publishers, N. E. Ass'n. of Teachers of English.

Owners: *The English Leaflet* is owned collectively by the members of the N. E. Ass'n. of Teachers of English.

President Alfred M. Hitchcock, Hartford Public School, Hartford, Conn.

Vice President: C. N. Greenough, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Known Bondholders, None.

(signed) CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS, *Editor*.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 25th day of September, 1915,

WM. T. HALLIDAY, *Notary Public*

(Seal.)

EDITORIAL NOTE

In addition to the courses in Public Speaking advertised in this issue, the following courses will prove of interest to English teachers at the Harvard Summer School, which opens July 10th:

1. English Composition and Methods of Teaching. — Lectures recitations, written exercises, and conferences. Professor H. ROBINSON SHIPHERD..
2. English Composition (advanced course). — Lectures, short themes, longer themes, and conferences. Mr. ROY FOLLETT.
3. English Composition. — Practice in writing, in the criticism of manuscript, and in instruction by conferences and lectures. Discussion of the principles of composition and of the organization and management of courses in English Composition. Professor CHESTER N. GREENOUGH.
4. Anglo-Saxon. Dr. KENNETH G. T. WEBSTER.
5. English Literature in the Eighteenth Century. Assist. Professor CHARLES T. COPELAND, assisted by Mr. T. L. HOOD.
6. American Literature. — Lectures, reading, and reports. Professor CHESTER N. GREENOUGH.
7. The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools. — The materials, methods, and equipment of a teacher of English in high schools and preparatory schools. Mr. CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS.
8. Fundamentals of Drama. — Lectures and discussions. Professor GEORGE P. BAKER, assisted by Mr. P. F. RENIERS.
9. Stage Management. Professor GEORGE P. BAKER, assisted by Mr. P. F. RENIERS.
10. Theatrical Design. — The general principles of Design with special study of their application to problems offered by the stage. Mr. MARTIN MOWER.

SHAKESPEARE QUESTIONS

*An Outline for the Study of
Shakespeare's Leading Plays*

By Odell Shepard

Riverside Literature Series. No. 246

Library Binding 50 cents. Postpaid

While prepared for use by college students this text will be especially helpful to teachers of Shakespeare in High Schools. Eighteen plays are treated.

Shakespeare plays in

The Riverside Literature Series

Each 15 cents paper. 25 cents linen

**As You Like It
Julius Caesar
The Tempest
Twelfth Night**

**Henry V
King Lear
Hamlet
Macbeth**

**A Midsummer Night's Dream
The Merchant of Venice
Romeo and Juliet**

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY, 4 Park Street, Boston

Harvard University—Summer Session

Public Speaking and Oral English

(DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH)

Eight Courses. Nine instructors from leading universities and colleges. Special Advanced Courses for teachers of Public Speaking.

- S 6. **Fundamentals of Speaking and Oral Reading.** Associate Professor John Corsa, A.M., Amherst College.
- S15. **Oral Reading.**—Intended especially for teachers of English. Assistant Professor B. C. Van Wye, A.M., University of Cincinnati.
- S17. **Oral Composition.**—Intended especially for teachers of English. Professor H. R. Shipherd, Ph.D., Pennsylvania College.
- S10. **Public Speaking.**—Principles and practice. Associate Professor Irvah L. Winter, A.B., Harvard University. Assistant Professor B. C. Van Wye, A.M., University of Cincinnati.
- S21. **Dramatic Interpretation.**—The modern play. Characterization and stage presentation. Associate Professor Thomas Crosby, A.M., Brown University.

ADVANCED COURSES FOR TEACHERS OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

- S 7. **Vocal Technique.**—Theory and training. Voice development; vocal physiology. Individual instruction. Associate Professor Irvah L. Winter, A.B., Harvard University. Associate Professor George McF. McKie, A.M., University of North Carolina. Dr. Smiley Blanton, B.S., M.D., University of Wisconsin.
- S 8. **Interpretation.**—Theory and practice. Dramatic literature, narrative prose and verse and lyric poetry. Individual instruction. Associate Professor Irvah L. Winter, A.B., Harvard University. Associate Professor George McF. McKie, A.M., University of North Carolina.
- S27. **Principles and Methods of Teaching.**—Study of textbooks; problems in the psychology and pedagogy of speaking and reading; the teaching of debating. Lectures, reports, conferences. Associate Professor Irvah L. Winter, A.B., Harvard University. Mr. J. S. Gaylord, A.M., State Normal School, Winona, Minn. Mr. A. P. Stone, A.B., LL.B., Harvard University.

For special circular address

Secretary Harvard Summer School
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Pancoast's English Prose and Verse

From Beowulf to Stevenson

By HENRY S. PANCOAST

816 pp. 8vo. \$1.75

WARREN W. READ, *Flushing High School, New York City:*

I have found many old familiar friends, that I have been unable to find in other books of its kind, and that every cultivated student should know. The selections have been made with rare judgment and appreciation.

MELLENGER E. HENRY, *Dickinson High School, Jersey City, N. J.:*

It appears to be one of the best books of its kind. Such a work is a monument to English literature.

FRED L. HOMER, *Pittsburgh High Schools, Pa.:*

I believe it to be the best single volume collection for school use I am acquainted with.

JOHN L. HANEY, *Central High School, Philadelphia, Pa.:*

It is a pleasure to note how successfully the editor has coped with the really perplexing problem that confronted him in the compilation of this volume. Every teacher will, of course, regret the absence of certain classics, but every fair-minded reader will admit that not even Professor Pancoast could perform the miracle of crowding everything into those 800 pages of literary treasure-trove. He has shown rare judgment in his apportionment of the space to the significant writers of each epoch.

Ready in June

Stone & Garrison's Essentials of Argument

By ARTHUR P. STONE, Instructor in English in Harvard

University and STEWART L. GARRISON, Instructor in

English and Public Speaking in Worcester Academy.

The basic principle of this class textbook is that argument is not a hybrid or freak form of composition in which analysis, evidence, and reasoning are the only things to be considered. There are chapters on the qualities of style with some attempt to apply the principles specifically to argument.

A chapter on Delivery and one on Debating are not theoretical but embody the practical results of the senior author, who has been the coach of eight Harvard inter-collegiate debating teams. Besides giving the courses in argument at Harvard, he is a judge and lawyer in active practice, and is in charge of the Advisory Committee at Harvard which has practical control of all the debating activities of the university.

The book includes all the subjects of the triangular debates between Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, and gives a specimen brief and argument with the authors' comments and criticism in detail.

HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

34 West 33d Street
NEW YORK

6 Park Street
BOSTON

623 So. Wabash Ave.
CHICAGO



English Prose and Poetry

1137-1892

Edited by John M. Manley

The University of Chicago

792 Pages

\$2.00

This volume was prepared in response to the wishes of teachers who need a comprehensive collection of literature in a single volume provided with notes. It presents all necessary material for a rapid survey course and is thoroughly provided for in the matter of editorial material. About one hundred pages of notes, discussing textual difficulties or biographical matter are placed at the end of the volume. Shorter notes are placed at the foot of the page. All annotations have been restricted to a practical minimum. The makeup of the book is most attractive. Thin paper renders the volume a convenient size while the large clear type fits it admirably for students' use. Not only will they enjoy using it but will be glad to own it later.



GINN AND COMPANY

Boston

New York

Chicago

London



Practical English for High Schools

By WILLIAM D. LEWIS, Principal William Penn High School for Girls, Philadelphia, and JAMES FLEMING HOSIC, Managing Editor, The English Journal, Secretary of National Council of Teachers of English, Head of Department of English, Chicago Normal College, Chicago. Price, \$1.00.

FRESHNESS of presentation and liveliness of tone characterize this book. The individuality of the book is well shown by the chapter titles which are informal and direct. For example: "Telling a Story," "Making People Understand," "Making People Believe," "Doing Business by Mail," "The Sentence at Work," "Building a Vocabulary," etc. An unusual and valuable feature is the Section on how to make correct recitations.

In method the book is inductive.

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

New York

Cincinnati

Chicago

Boston

Atlanta